

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9997

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 1268

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CU, DR, US
SUBJ: GULF & WESTERN EXECUTIVE'S VIEWS ON VISIT TO CUBA

1. CARLOS MORALES TRONCOSO, PRESIDENT OF GULF & WESTERN AMERICAS, RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE MEETING OF SUGAR PRODUCERS IN HAVANA AND GAVE HIS IMPRESSIONS YESTERDAY TO THE AMBASSADOR. MORALES HAD KNOWN HAVANA PRE-CASTRO. MOST OF HIS IMPRESSIONS WERE TYPICAL OF THOSE WHO VISIT CUBA UNDER CASTRO FOR THE FIRST TIME, BUT SEVERAL ASPECTS MAY BE OF INTEREST. TYPICAL REACTIONS WERE THE SADNESS OF HAVANA, THE LACK OF FREEDOM FOR THE CUBAN PEOPLE, PROGRESS IN EDUCATION,PUBLIC HEALTH, DAIRY CATTLE AND FISHING (DOLLARS FIFTY MILLION IN EXPORTS OF LOBSTERS AND SHRIMP ALONE, HE WAS TOLD).

2. AT A RECEPTION WHERE FIDEL CASTRO, RAUL CASTRO AND CARLOS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ WERE PRESENT, CASTRO MADE A POINT OF SEEKING OUT THE DOMINICAN DELEGATION AND MORALES SPENT SOME TWENTY MINUTES WITH HIM. IN ADDITION TO BEING IMPRESSED BY CASTRO'S DYNAMISM, SHOWMANSHIP AND APPARENT TIRELESSNESS, HE WAS SURPRISED BY CASTRO'S DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUGAR INDUSTRY IN GENERAL AND OF GULF & WESTERN'S SUGAR OPERATION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
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SPECIFICALLY.

3. ALL OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED CUBAN LEADERS MANIFESTED A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE US. FIDEL CASTRO INDICATED THAT COMMERCIAL RELATIONS SHOULD BE REESTABLISHED FIRST - LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO WOULD BE TAKEN AS A SIGN OF US GOOD WILL (THE

CLASSICAL CUBAN POSITION). THE SEEMINGLY FLEXIBLE AND FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US THAT WAS DISPLAYED WAS JARRED WHEN SOMEONE ASKED HOW SUGAR PRICES MIGHT BE IMPROVED. CASTRO REPLIED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE SUGAR MEETING WAS TO AGREE UPON A UNIFIED POSITION "BECAUSE THE ENEMY HAS US DIVIDED."

4. CONTINUING, MORALES SAID THAT THE CUBAN SUGAR AUTHORITIES WITH WHOM THEY MET WERE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR CRITICISM AND DISTASTE FOR THE SOVIETS (ANOTHER FAIRLY STANDARD REPORT).

5. MORALES SINGLED OUT TWO CUBAN OFFICIALS WHO TRAVELED FREQUENTLY TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: ASWALDO CARDENAS, CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF FOR CARIBBEAN AFFAIRS AND FORMER CUBAN CONSUL GENERAL AT KINGSTON, AND OMAR CORDOBA WHO HOLDS THE TECHNICAL TITLE OF "PROTOCOL OFFICER." HURWITCH

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Sent Date: 16-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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